

EDITORIAL

Coverage in PubMed

This is the last issue of HBP for 2006. I take this opportunity as Editor in Chief, to thank the Editorial Board, the IHPBA Publication Committee and Council and the many contributions to HPB for their support of the Journal. I have heard, and the readers of the journal would agree, that our Journal is now making a significant contribution to the distribution of knowledge and original research in the areas of liver, biliary and pancreatic surgery. Recent questionnaires that have been sent to the members of the IHPBA consistently respond that the Journal is one of the most valuable assets of the Association.

When I took on the editorship of the HPB one of my major aims was to achieve indexation in all of the indexing services and to register our Journal for an impact factor. I am pleased to say developments which have occurred in recent months, have placed HPB well on the way to achieving these aims.

Following application to the National Library of Medicine, HPB has now been approved for inclusion in PubMed Central (PMC). PMC is an electronic archive of full-text journal articles, offering free access to its contents. PMC contains over half a million articles, most of which have a corresponding entry in PubMed. For HPB, coverage in PMC will lead to coverage in PubMed. Hence, as a result of inclusion in PMC, there will be electronic access via PubMed to all of our Journal articles beginning with the first issue of HPB. The aim is to have the full journal content available on PMC by the year-end.

Both PMC and PubMed are easy to use. Searches can be made using MeSH terms, author names, title words, text words or phrases, journal names or any combination of these. Retrieved citations are displayed and their associated abstracts (PubMed), or full-texts (PMC) can be selected for viewing. A unique feature of PubMed is the ability to instantly find related articles for any citation. Additional search modes offer the ability to perform more complex searches by specifying data fields, age groups, gender or human or animal studies. A special clinical queries page provides customised searches for studies based on aetiology, diagnosis, prognosis, or treatment of a particular disease. Systematic reviews of a topic and

medical genetics can also be searched here. Search results can be viewed or downloaded in various formats, including a format suitable for bibliographic management software.

The importance of this development for the Journal is this ready accessibility to the articles that have been published in HPB since Volume 1 and consequently a greater chance of citation of the articles. Citation is very important as this is the way an impact factor is generated for the Journal.

The impact factor measures the ratio of citations to articles published in a given year. It shows the standard of the average paper published by journal and is often interpreted as a measure of the journal's overall quality. Thompson Scientific – formerly the Institute of Scientific Information, or ISI – produce annual Journal Citation Reports (JCRs) in a wide range of subjects. These are calculated on the basis of each journal's impact factor, and divided into two main listings; the Science Citation Index (SCI) and the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI). Hence, for any journal the impact factor for say year 2006 is; total 2006 citations to all items published in 2004 and 2005 divided by the total papers published in 2004 and 2005.

Up until now HPB has been indexed in Excerpta Medical – EMBASE and the SIIC database. These are extensive and very comprehensive indexing services, which by their nature need subscription from the users. As a result they are not widely accessible to clinicians and researchers and hence these indexing services despite their comprehensiveness are not widely used. PubMed on the other hand is freely accessible and is the most widely used medical database. Thus achieving recognition by PMC and thereby also PubMed, will mean ready access to the articles published in HPB and thus an increase in the citation frequency.

It is important for HPB to have an impact factor and it is also very important that this impact factor start to increase as the years go by. However, there is no point in applying for an impact factor until the papers published in HPB are being cited. Registration in PMC and PubMed will ensure increased citation

and it will be at that time that our publishers will apply for HPB to have an impact factor registered.

The second major development, which has recently occurred, has been the development of electronic submission of manuscripts and the electronic handling of these manuscripts by reviewers and the editorial office. This is another major development, which enhances the Journal. It will mean that submitted manuscripts can be worked on efficiently and expeditiously so that the time delay for publication shall be significantly reduced.

All of these developments I trust shall enhance the visibility of HPB and its attractiveness for publishing the best possible articles. I encourage readers and members of the IHPBA and members of our regional organisation (AHPBA APHPBA EHPBA) to send to the Journal their best possible manuscripts. Quality breeds quality which inturn determines citation and ultimately a high impact factor.

Jim Toouli
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